the golden section

The Monochrome Issue

And so we're here again.
I did not believe that there would be a second issue of The Golden Zine. Mostly due to just how difficult it was to scrape together works from my peers.

This issue, like the last, is a compilation of essays and poems from a nameless collective. Also, like the last, There is no specific theming to the gathered works.

However, as you read, keep in your mind the position you hold as an observer, a voyeur, into the lives and emotions of defaced people.

There are dead bodies ahead, monochrome, but dead nonetheless.

Enjoy

- NG

skate.
The Death of a Culture

“High culture, low culture. I really means nothing anymore. Culture’s up for grabs”
- Harmony Korine

Pt. 1: skate. review

skate. is a fine game. It’s just fine. In case you haven't heard of the newest installment in the Skate game series, skate. was released into early access in September of 2025, more than 15 years after the previous installment. A 15 year gap in between releases is bound to build expectations for quality, regardless of game series or medium. In this case, skate. is following up Skate 3, widely regarded to be the best skating game ever made.

skate. plays fine. There have been a few welcome gameplay changes made from Skate 3. For one, they widened off board movement to include more parkour elements. You’re able to easily climb buildings to reach spots otherwise only reachable by glitches. On board mechanics have also been further refined. The game feels good to play. For the most part…

My experience with skate. started with quite possibly the worst gaming adventure I’ve ever had. On launch day I excitedly came home from school and was greeted with a roughly four hour download time on release day. I patiently sat through it only to be put in a queue of 200,000 people waiting for a lobby.

skate. developers made the inspired choice to offer the game as an online exclusive title. This means that you as a player are required to join a server hosted by EA themselves. You share this lobby with up to 150 live players who you are able to interact with. There is no way to locally host a server in skate. You are not physically able to play the game by yourself.

I emphasize this because of what happened next: the queue to join a lobby quickly jumped to 500,000, then 1 million, then the game crashed. I, and a million other people, were unable to play the game that they downloaded due to the decision to make skate. strictly online.
After the skate. queues calmed down to a manageable tens of thousands of people, I ran into another issue wherein my wifi connection wasn't strong enough to play the game for more than five minutes before being kicked from the server. I resolved this by moving a wifi extender into the room I was playing in which noticeably degraded the wifi quality in the rest of the house.

I really wanted to love skate. I had been playing Skate 3 for nearly five years and it hadn't lost its luster after all that time. I was still able to pick Skate 3 up and play for hours on end, just messing around in freeroam. The game is timeless. All I wanted out of skate. was a game that replicates the feeling of aimlessly skating around locations vaguely reminiscent of familiar places. I wanted to be able to get lost in the maps and lose track of time trying to land a cool sequence of tricks.

What I got was, on the surface level, just barely passable as a Skate game. You could indeed ride on a skateboard. You could do tricks, walk around, jump even. But the DNA was gone. After a month of playing I understood, there was something rotten about skate.

Pt. 2: Something Rotten

Skate culture is dead. This is not an alarmist opinion spurred on by a single bad game. This is a measurable idea. There are no more home skate videos being circulated on tape by local skate shops. There's no more skate magazines writing articles about up and coming skaters they think can "Go Pro". There's nothing left of the golden age of skating culture. The skateboard and everything surrounding it is a textbook example of postmodernism as an event, changing the perception of a medium as it evolves.

Let me tell you about harmony korine:

Cali born filmmaker Harmony Korine is something of a modern Davinci. Or rather, a popular Marquis de Sade. Actually, Korine is kinda just Korine. He started his career documenting life for New York City adolescents in Kids (1995). He would then go on to write and direct one of the most widely celebrated transgressive films of the modern era: Gummo. "Transgressive" is the word that I think best describes Korine. He has no steadfast aesthetic ideals. All of his more recent projects utilize AI generated visuals which starkly contrasts the near intimate filmmaking of his prior work. There is no one set of images which Harmony Korine belongs to. And that's where we find the modern skater

Harmony Korine was raised by skate groups all around the US. From Los Angeles to New York to Miami, skating had mostly similar aesthetic values. Skate culture used to be synonymous with counterculture. The active betrayal of prominent moral and societal structures is what gave skating its appeal. It was usually illegal to skate on public property. Aesthetics associated with skating (graffiti, fighting, drugs, alcohol, etc…) serve to heighten the already "immoral" act of eschewing public law to partake in a hobby.

What Harmony did well was capture the surrounding qualia of skate culture. While Kids (1995) was a harsh reminiscence of illegal activities among youths, what it did

more accurately was explore what was upstream of skating. The skateboard was an artform used to express pain and reckless hedonism that came with being a “troubled” youth in the 1990s. Skate films are voyeuristic in nature, attempting to glamourize an inherently immoral culture. Such countercultural icons are what drive Harmony Korine to create movies.

What happens when you get rid of the transgressive nature of skate culture? No more violence, drugs, alcohol, sex, expletives, grime, and crime? All you have is the skateboard and a million dollars. Are you having fun with a skateboard and a million dollars? Probably. However, you no longer have a thriving culture. Instead, you have a stagnant pond filled with recycled images and signifiers of a time gone by.

Harmony Korine has seemingly moved on from skate culture. His latest film, Baby Invasion, is a fucked up video game of a movie. The heavy usage of generative AI visuals produced outrage among many watchers. And also music by MOTHERFUCKING BURIAL OF ALL GODDAMN PEOPLE. I, personally, have not watched any Harmony Korine feature film made after 2010 and thus have only anecdotal thoughts to share.

I find Harmony's latest works to be a better reflection of modern skate culture than any movie, game, or youtube video. Korine makes hyper-commercial “slop”. Movies filled with flashing colors, loud music, plastic, and questionable aesthetic choices. It truly is a slog to get through any of his latest work. This is how I imagine it felt to watch skate films in the 90s.

Korine has recently spearheaded an artist collective known as “Edglrd”. The creative output of this group is indescribable. It’s all fucking loud as shit. It’s counter counter culture. It’s everything skate culture has become.

And so we’re back to skate. This game sucks ass because it has no more source material. Skate culture is dead. The skate game series has no imagery to work off of which is why it pulls from an abstract set of visuals similar to games such as Fortnite or whatever the fuck Edglrd is doing. skate. is an accurate reflection of the climate. The climate is just shit.

If you want me to say more you can stick it up you sideways. I’m fucking done. You can see where the Vyvance wore off in the writing

The Aniconist

Fuck the postmodern appeal
I, the poet, am the aniconist
May no proper depiction
Let the blood shed
Fall without id

To make a draft
Of a leaf-longged poem
Into a relentless void she wrote

For I am God
You, my child
May be furthest

I allow myself the pleasure
I'n a morrowind light
I borrow in sad phrases
I, the aniconist
May be the furthest

You, the aniconist
Need to fucking die
No manners may
In any way
Get the insides out

The roles have been
Spelled out, in perpetuity
Not in memory

In the rest of your life
You will (not may) feel
Pain unimaginable

God's grace cannot
Save you from being
The furthest

God's grace
Let this happen

– There's not a drug on earth can make life meaningful.

– You allow this state of desperate absurdity.

(Silence.)

155. Our society tends to regard as a "sickness" any mode of thought or behavior that is inconvenient for the system, and this is plausible because when an individual doesn't fit into the system it causes pain to the individual as well as problems for the system. Thus the manipulation of an individual to adjust him to the system is seen as a "cure" for a "sickness" and therefore as good.

statues and images were believed to be inhabited by devils.

Professional people, too, like to play.

The State and Revolution and Nimona

The following article was written with the hopes of adapting it to a youtube video essay. Obviously, I never got around to doing so. Because it was written in a stupor of naive passion, I don't think I ever will.

Nimona is a children's animated movie that was released to the public in June of 2023. The film is based on a 2015 graphic novel of the same name written and illustrated by ND Stevenson which I have not read. Nimona the movie follows a 15 year old genderfluid god and her gay sidekick as they fight against the female version of Avery Rockefeller. In their quest to ejector the director. (Spoilers) Spoilers for Nimona.

Nimona is a good movie. Go watch it.

Nimona starts with some lovely exposition which I'm going to gloss over because I can. Then we get a scene of the gays hanging out before the super cop initiation. Oh, btw, the symbolism in this movie is really heavy handed. Knights are cops. The glorification of knights alongside their ineptitude and mindless defending of a corrupt system draws obvious parallels to actual police institutions.

Ballister, who is the main character if you didnt know, gets knighted and the central conflict of nimoa is set up as a hidden laser in ballisters sword goes off and kills the queen who was nighting him. This scene carries a bit more weight within the context of the film because the queen that was killed was also working to undo the classist system behind the knighting. Ballister would have been the first knight of "non nobel blood" to be knighted had the ceremony not been cut short. In a scene previous it was shown that ballister had graduated from knight school or whatever at the top of his class and even still, his knighting was controversial among the public due to his "Commoner heritage". This is another one of those heavy handed symbolism moments where class is equated to race probably. I honestly don't know what classes in nimona are supposed to represent. It doesn't really matter though as being just vague enough with the symbolism allows for anyone in an oppressed group to relate to it. The commoners are oppressed and therefore oppressed peoples can find solace in ballaster overcoming injustices to succeed in the institute. However, with the queen very much dead, ballister is now seen as a villain and has to go into hiding.

This is where we get our introduction to Nimona. We see her spray painting a propaganda poster and- quick side tangent, I love graffitti from the bottom of my heart. Any character that is introduced with vandalism automatically gets put into this book that I have right here. Street art in general itches that scratch that i'm sure we

book that I have right here. Street art in general itches that scratch that i'm sure we all have to do something illigal. Only instead of like, breaking and entering, you can create something with street art. And if you do it well enough, you can raise millions of dollars for HIV awareness. Or make a really weird hotel. For legal reasons, I am not saying you should graffiti your local footbridge at 2:00 am when there's the least amount of traffic, because that is illigal. But in a work of fiction, graffiti, vandalism, street art, whatever is just a beautiful way of showing where a characters priorities lie.

Back to nimona, I'm going to be using she\her pronouns for her as both in the movie and the screenplay that I downloaded illegally they are used. Nimona is a very obvious genderfluid allegory. She is a shapeshifter who is forced to take the form of a 15 year old girl in fear that she is revealed to be a "monster". In the nimona universe, monster is a slur. In case you didn't watch the movie. (pointed stare) It's implied that monster is a derogatory term because outside the kingdom walls, a monster is said to be lurking. A monster that the knights from before are supposed to be fighting against. Anyways, nimona.

Nimona knocks on the door of ballister's hideout and they exchange some words that are probably important to move the story forward, Ballister gets arrested and Nimona breaks him out and they are back at the hideout where we are now right *here* in the monomyth. This is the scene in the movie that thoroughly convinced me there is something more here. Ballister confronts nimona about why she is helping him. And in response nimona says:

(I'm bored)

pt 2 I'm bored

This is where the video essay starts. I feel the need to explain that this video essay is about Nimona the movie character. Nimona, in the movie has no specified age nor a defined "origin". I respect the director's choice to leave her story vague and up to the audience's interpretation, after all, the main character is decidedly Ballister, and it's Ballister who undergoes the traditional, "Hero's journey". However, The name of the movie is nimona. People are going to pay attention to nimona.
But who is nimona? Who is this quirky little queer allegory? (Pause)
I'm going to be honest, I completely misread what nimona was supposed to represent when I first watched the movie. I mean, It's obvious that nimona is just a stand-in for any queer identity. More specifically, gender fluidity. Nimona also represents the queer community as a whole. The way she is framed as a threat to "the institute", the constant debate over whether or not she really is a monster, all she wants is to be accepted. And yet the institution that vilinizes her only does so because of a millennium old story stemming from a misunderstanding. Nimona perfectly encaptures the queer experience not just for an individual, but across the

entirety of our existence.

That's who nimona is. She is a bitter victim of a society that is built around the eradication of her existence. There are some beautiful bits of symbolism that come with this as well. Towards the end of the movie,. cannons that were built to protect the city from monster attacks from outside the walls are turned into the city when it is found that nimona is inside the city. It is outright said that firing the cannons will kill innocent civilians. If we take nimona as a metaphor for trans people, this is a true and elegant statement on how transphobia affects everyone. I will not go into detail about this specific metaphor, but if you want to learn more about the subject, I recommend the video "fear of trans bodies" by lilly alexandre where She covers the cascading effects of transphobia.

However, when watching Nimona for the first time, I felt as though there was something more to her than just a "Metaphor for trans people". I said before that Nimona is a bitter victim. I don't think this covers all of her demeanor. Nimona is an immortal shapeshifter. One montage shows her frolicking as many different animals over an indeterminate amount of time. She attempts time and time again to join groups of animals that she has shifted into only to be rejected for no apparent reason. This is more than a queer allegory. This is the struggle of an individual who knows that there is something fundamentally different about them. Nimona isn't just different though, she is a god. She is greater than any one person can imagine. This is what makes her struggles to integrate into a society all the more tragic.

I do not feel that the Nimona movie fully explored the potential for her to be a timeless divine being. I don't think this is a fault of the movie though. It's a children's film. When I was a child I was busy with important things, such as:.. Listening to dubstep or something. I didn't have time for complex character studies. I assume that most children are the same as me. Being a movie for children, I am more inclined to enjoy the sometimes juvenile humor for what it is. Even with its shortcomings, I enjoyed the process of discovering who nimona as a character more than the movie itself. I think this is a common experience among "media enjoyers" to have media that doesn't quite meet your expectations. In fact, There's this meme I saw that I liked enough to print out. I… Uh… I really like it. In this case I'm not really writing fanfiction. I never liked writing fanfiction. Instead I write essays. I can't imagine how much easier my life would be if I started writing fanfictions instead of whatever this is. Uhhhhhhhhhhh

Anyways, Nimona is not just a trans allegory, but the best trans allegory. I've never seen a character that both points out the injustices behind a transphobic society and also emphasizes just how "Above" the situation they are. I mean, Every trans person knows that transphobia is just plain wrong. Like, no matter the root of the argument, the transphobe making it is always missing something. Personally, I've gotten bored of constantly debating if I am allowed to exist as a person outside of the

gender binary, and I get the feeling that Nimona is as well. Nimona is who I wish I could be. I wish I could be this confident about my identity. I wish I could be so sure that thousands of years of human history were all just a misunderstanding. I wish I could be a billion years old and also a shapeshifter.

This video has not gone according to plan at all. I'm glad that my actions online have no consequences because I don't think this video will jive too well with other media I plan on releasing This will probably be the only scripted video I post on this channel for a long while. If you enjoyed it, remember that there is no god and death is an eternal barrier in which nothing will pass.

The Motorcycle Death Cult

I was looking at motorcycles in class one day when a boy no older than 16 tapped my shoulder and asked:

“You ride?”

I told him I didn’t but I wanted to. He responded by listing off a series of model numbers that I should check out. He said some vague words on pricing and then told me to “Always buy japanese”.

This entire conversation took place with this boy’s hand on my shoulder. I was immensely uncomfortable but was pleased by the boy’s passion for motorcycles. I wasn’t quite convinced to buy the recommended models, mainly due to his unabashed usage of jargon which I had no hope of remembering.

I didn’t have the heart to tell him my real thoughts on motorcycle culture. Nor did I want to tell him that I was only looking at bikes as a comparison for a design project I was working on. I only hoped that he came away from that conversation feeling good about converting a car driver to a bike rider.

I fucking hate motorcycles. I hate the culture. I hate the noise. I hate cruisers, touring bikes, streetfighters, and dirt bikes alike. I find the people who ride them to be insufferable. I want to own and ride an electric sport bike one day. I want to drive it daily it for my commute. I want to bomb down empty highways late at night without a care in the world.

It is with this contradictory introduction that I give you my actual thoughts on motorcycle culture: the postmodern death cult.

I would like to recite a few statistics.

In 2023:

6,335 motorcyclists died in the US.

82,564 injuries resulted from motorcycle collisions

There were recorded to be 8.8 million motorcyclists in the US.

Statistically, a motorcyclist going into 2023 could pick a number from 1 to 100, and if their number happened to be chosen, they would wreck. Of those whose number got chosen, nearly 8% would die.

Isn't that scary? Imagine rolling the dice every time you wanted to leave your house. Why would anyone do something so dangerous?

It is estimated that roughly 2.3% of automobile drivers wrecked in 2023. 37,654 US drivers died as a result. That is 104 people per day, or 4 people per hour.

That was a lot of numbers.

What you need to know is that the United States is fucked when it comes to transportation. Car culture and its effects are literally killing its patrons.

But they're so fucking cool though. Cars for me represent the perfect intersection of meaningful aesthetics and progressive technology. I can't help but note my opinions on every novel car I see, whether it is a beat up old ford f-series or a tasteful and sleek aston martin that I see outside my neighborhood.

The categorization aspects of car culture make it immediately appealing to children and those with proclivities for stuff of the like. Each brand having a unique language of design and specific history provides an almost anthropomorphic quality to what is ultimately a group of profit-seeking corporations.

I love car culture in spite of its sordid traits. I picked up motorsports as a hobby from a young age, joining a racing club as soon as I started high school. I want cars to be a part of my life for as long as possible.

And so it serves that motorcycles would inevitably enter my field of interests at some point or another.

What i've found in my recent fourier into motorcycle culture is that it contains all of the aspects of car culture concentrated down into a bitter drink of animosity and hedonism. This is a fun reflection of the object itself as there is physically less material in a motorcycle to put care into. The size and simplicity of a motorcycle provides a lower price and thus, a lower barrier of entry into motorcycle ownership. This contrasts the